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QUICK TRANSIT BETWEEN NEW YORK AND LONDON.

BY AUSTIN CORBIN.

THE introduction of some means of rapid transit between the two great English-speaking nations, wholly free from the inconveniences, delays and hazards due to tides, fogs and storms encountered in narrow and crowded water-ways and along dangerous coasts, is of the utmost importance to all transatlantic travellers, who look upon the voyage as a necessary means to an end. The universal demand is for the shortest possible sea passage for travellers and the quickest delivery of the mails between the two great distributing cities, London and New York.

The question, in projecting the best transatlantic steamship line, is how to secure a route which shall combine the merits of shortness and directness with the greatest safety and comfort to the traveller. In solving this question, ports having a particularly advantageous geographical location for embarkation and debarkation, and from which vessels can at once attain full speed, must be selected, and ships must be run which will have the maximum of speed, coupled with all the modern conveniences for security and comfort.

As the western terminus for a new transatlantic route, it is

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proposed to select Fort Pond Bay, which is one of the finest natural harbors in the world. It is located on the north side of Long Island, six miles west of Montauk Point, and 114 miles from New York City. As shown by the latest government charts, it is of such great and uniform depth that the largest steamers can enter or depart from it day or night throughout the year, without danger of detention. To enter this harbor, all large steamers would depart from the usual route between Great Britain or Europe and New York, at a point a little south of Nantucket Shoals, and would proceed in a straight course through unobstructed waters to the entrance of Block Island Sound, west of Block Island. This entrance has a width of five miles, between Phelps Ledge and a small shoal located a little to the westward of Southwest Ledge, its minimum depth being seven fathoms. From this point the course would be through Block Island Sound, passing between Shagwong Reef and Cerberus Shoal, which are four miles apart, and between which the minimum depth of water is eight fathoms. Thence the course is direct, through absolutely unobstructed waters, into Fort Pond Bay, whose entrance is three-quarters of a mile wide, and where the tides never exceed three feet five inches. In selecting this harbor for the western terminus of a new transatlantic route, the entire southern shore of Long Island and the eastern coast of New Jersey are avoided; the risk from collision on the much-frequented North River and New York Bay is escaped, and the long delay at Sandy Hook and the slow passage through the twenty-five miles of tortuous and crowded channels from Sandy Hook Lightship to the New York piers are done away with.

Having chosen Fort Pond Bay as the western terminus of the proposed route, the selection of a British port of arrival and departure becomes the chief matter requiring consideration. Of the competing ports of Liverpool, Southampton and Milford, the last is the most accessible at all times, and possesses in the highest degree all the advantages necessary for a port of arrival and departure. To reach this port, vessels taking the usual course to Queenstown and Liverpool, after sighting Fastnet Light, off Cape Clear, on the southern coast of Ireland, would bear directly eastward to the most westerly port of Wales which is Milford Haven, and thus avoid the disagreeable and dangerous trip through a channel full of shipping at all hours of the day and night.

This harbor, which has an entrance more than a mile and a half wide, with a minimum depth sufficient for the largest steamers, is entirely land-locked, and no seas of any consequence to large vessels can rise in it. The tides in the Haven are very slight, running not more than one and one-half knots per hour, while in the Solent they run as high as four and one-half knots. Fog is much less prevalent in the approach to Milford than around the Scilly Islands, which must be passed in approaching Southampton. Observations taken at the Milford Docks during the past four years show that during that time there have been but forty-four days on which fog existed in the Haven, and then only for a few hours. According to the statistics of the Meteorological Society the number of fogs prevailing at and around the Scilly Islands is nearly double the number found on the south coast of Ireland, the approach to Milford Haven.

This prevalence of fogs increases the necessary reduction of speed in approaching the coast at the entrance to the Solent, and makes navigation to Southampton much more dangerous. This can be fully understood when it is remembered that all vessels must pass the Needles, and run up the narrow channels between the sandbanks of Southampton Water before they can reach their destination. The Mersey channel is not less exposed to these dangers, as it is always more or less filled with shipping. But Milford Haven has free and uninterrupted access to and from the sea, and is a harbor into which the largest vessel afloat, or which is contemplated, can steam at any hour of day or night. It has a depth of thirty-four feet at the pier where vessels would land for discharging mails and passengers. At the end of this pier is the Great Western Railway Station, which could be entered without stepping from under cover, and from which special trains could be run to London in less than five hours.

How essential it is that steamers should be able to go up to their piers, at all times, regardless of tides, is shown by the great efforts and enormous expenditures made by Liverpool and Southampton to secure such piers. Their efforts have met with practical success, so that it is now possible for both the Liverpool and Southampton lines to boast of terminal facilities which enable them to advertise a fixed hour of departure.

What, then, are the other advantages to be gained, which should induce the American people to insist upon the adoption of a new route, with Fort Pond Bay and Milford Haven as the termini? To answer this question, it is necessary to compare carefully the proposed route with those already in existence. There are two main routes between New York and London. The first is by the way of Queenstown and Liverpool and thence by rail to London; the second is by way of Southampton and rail to London. The first route may be subdivided into (*a*) the passenger route by which the traveller, after being compelled to wait at Queenstown while the mail is transferred, is then carried on to Liverpool, and thence by rail to London, and (*b*) the Overland Mail Route by vessel to Queenstown and thence by rail to Kingstown or Dublin, again by vessel to Holyhead, and then by the London and North Western Railway to Euston Station, London. The mail route by Queenstown entails considerable extra expense on the passenger, as well as the great inconvenience of repeated changes, and is consequently very little used by travellers, except under special circumstances.

For the purpose of determining the relative merits of the routes already established, and comparing their *intrinsic value* with the *true worth* of the route proposed between New York and London by way of Fort Pond Bay and Milford Haven, it is necessary to adopt some absolute standard of speed for both the steamers and railway trains, and ascertain the exact difference in the lengths of the several sea routes, as well as the railway journeys from the ports of debarkation to London and New York.

All previous comparisons have been rendered difficult because fixed standards have not been taken, and because eastward and westward passages have been confounded. The proper method is to consider passages in the same direction, and to deal with the same ship in all cases, and having determined its rate of speed, and the length of the different routes, ascertain over which route it could make the passage in the shortest time.

The best record made prior to this date has been assumed as the standard of speed for all calculations. The fastest eastward ocean steaming yet made is certified by the Cunard Company to have been five days eight hours and thirty-eight minutes by the "Lucania." The average run was exactly 21.90 knots per hour. This rate is therefore taken as the standard in all cases. In determining the length of the different routes, it can be fairly assumed, for the purpose of comparison, that all steamers plying between the same termini traverse the same distances during corresponding periods of the year, or could easily do so, whether the passage be eastward or westward. If they do not, it is because the master of one ship is willing to increase the sailing distance in order to lessen the dangers of the voyage, or *vice versa.* It is only necessary, therefore, to ascertain what advantage one route has over its rivals in reference to their *expedient courses.* By expedient course is meant the shortest course, between the same termini, which experience has shown should be chosen, consistent with the season and dangers of the voyage, in distinction from the shortest *geographical* route. The principal transatlantic steamship companies have adopted regular expedient routes which are now actually in force, and should be followed by all steamers. These routes practically coincide for the greater part of the distance across the ocean. In determining, therefore, the advantage which one route has over another, the distance for which they coincide may be eliminated, and the routes considered only from the points of divergence to their respective termini.

The passenger and mail routes by way of Queenstown would coincide with the route to Milford Haven until they reached the meridian of Fastnet, at a point ten miles south of the Fastnet Light. From this point the two courses would begin to diverge, but the exact distances in both cases to their respective termini can be easily ascertained, and they are unchangeable, being the same in every season and in all kinds of weather.

The following tables show the distances from *the point of divergence* to the ports of destination, the shortest railway distances, and the total time necessary for carrying the mail from the point of divergence to the London Post-office by the three different routes. These calculations assume that steamers could proceed at the *maximum* speed of twenty-one and nine-tenth knots per hour *from the point of divergence to their piers,* and that trains could be run at the rate of a mile per minute over the whole railway distances.

The detentions in transferring at the several ports are exceedingly variable, depending upon temporary conditions ; but, as the purpose of these particular tables is to show the *intrinsic* merit, not the actual gain of the Milford Haven route over the already-established routes, a fixed delay of one hour is assumed. This may be too short, or it may be too long, a time, but it is as just a standard for one route as it is for the others. The delay at Queenstown is necessarily longer, as the transfer is there made by means of a tender; the usual time is therefore taken. The transfers at Kingstown and Holyhead, being chiefly transfers of mails, are assumed to take only thirty minutes.

Queenstown Mail Route.

Description of Route.	Distances.	Time.	
From Fastnet to Queenstown (Roche's Point Light)	57 knots.	2 h.	36 m.
Detention at Queenstown (two transfers of mail and tender to landing)		2 h.	30 m.
Queenstown to Kingstown by rail	185 miles.	3 h.	05 m.
Transfer at Kingstown			30 m.
Kingstown to Holyhead	56 knots.	2 h.	34 m.
Transfer at Holyhead			30 m.
Holyhead to London	264 miles.	4 h.	24 m.
Euston Station to London post-office		1 h.	
Total time from point of divergence to London post-office		17 h.	09 m.

Passenger Route to Liverpool, Leaving Mail at Queenstown.

Description of Route.	Distances.	Time.	
Fastnet to Queenstown (Roche's Point Light)	57 knots.	2 h.	36 m.
Detention at Queenstown (for transferring mails)		1 h.	30 m.
Queenstown to Liverpool	240 knots.	10 h.	57 m.
Detention at Liverpool		1 h.	
Liverpool to London	201 miles.	3 h.	21 m.
Station to post-office		1 h.	
Total time from point of divergence to London post-office		20 h.	24 m.

Milford Haven Route.

Description of Route.	Distances.	Time.	
Meridian of Fastnet to Milford Haven	170 knots.	7 h.	46 m.
Detention at Milford		1 h.	
Milford Haven to London	273 miles.	4 h.	33 m.
Paddington Station to post-office		1 h.	
Total time from point of divergence to London post-office		14 h.	19 m.

In computing the time for the Liverpool passenger route, one hour and thirty minutes is allowed for transferring the mail at Queenstown, as all the fast steamers running between Liverpool and New York are under government contract to stop there for discharging and receiving the mails. If this delay were omitted the time would be reduced to eighteen hours fifty-four minutes.

It is a little more difficult to compare the Southampton route with the Milford Haven route, as the point of divergence of the two courses is much farther to the west, but from this point of divergence both courses are on the arc of a great circle, and vary little, if any, in length to the meridian of Fastnet, so that it is only necessary to consider the distances from that meridian. From the meridian of Fastnet, the distance to Milford Haven is 170 knots, and to Southampton 343 knots.

The following table, compared with the preceding table, giving the time from Fastnet to London Post-office, by way of Milford

Haven, will give the net gain of the Milford route over the Southampton route.

SOUTHAMPTON ROUTE.

Description of route.	Distances.	Time.	
Meridian of Fastnet to Southampton	343 knots.	15 h.	40 m.
Transfer at Southampton	....	1 h.	......
Southampton to London	79 miles.	1 h.	19 m.
Waterloo Station to post-office	....	1 h.	......
Total time from meridian of Fastnet to London post-office		18 h.	59 m.

It will thus be seen that steamers using the Milford Haven Harbor would gain four hours and forty minutes over the Southampton route; six hours and five minutes over the Liverpool passenger route, including the delay at Queenstown, and four hours and thirty-five minutes excluding it; and two hours and fifty minutes over the Queenstown mail route.

It is much easier to determine the gain made by using Fort Pond Bay, for, as a rule, all large steamers from Great Britain or Northern Europe, approaching New York Harbor, aim to pass the southern end of Nantucket Shoals in about latitude forty degrees, forty minutes north, and longitude sixty-nine degrees twenty minutes west, from which position the course for Sandy Hook Lightship is west three-eighth degrees north, the distance being 207 knots. Assuming that the whole distance of 207 knots could be run at the maximum speed of twenty-one and nine-tenth knots per hour, it would take *nine hours twenty-seven minutes* to reach Sandy Hook Lightship. From this vessel it is twenty-five knots to the pier of the American Line in New York, and as this distance is through narrow, winding channels and through New York Harbor, it must be run at greatly reduced speed. The average time consumed by steamers from the Sandy Hook Lightship to their respective piers is *three* hours, making the total time from the point of divergence of the two routes to the pier in New York *twelve hours twenty-seven minutes,* to which must be added one hour for transporting mail from the pier to the post-office, making *thirteen hours twenty-seven minutes.* The distance from the *point of divergence* to the foot of Fort Pond Bay is 123 knots, all of which is through open and unobstructed waters, and through all of which, to the entrance of the bay, the maximum speed can be maintained in clear weather.

FORT POND BAY ROUTE.

Description of Route.	Distances.	Time.
Point of divergence to Fort Pond Bay	123 knots	5 h. 37 m.
Transfer at Fort Pond Bay		1 h.
Fort Pond Bay to New York, by rail	114 miles	1 h. 54 m.
Station to Post-Office		1 h.
Total time from point of divergence to New York post-office, by Fort Pond Bay Route		9 h. 31 m.
Total time required from point of divergence to New York post-office, by present route		13 h. 27 m.

This shows an estimated saving in favor of Fort Pond Bay, of *three hours and fifty-six minutes,* based on the assumption that vessels are run at full speed to the Sandy Hook Lightship. The actual gain would always be greater than the estimated. Statistics received from the hydrographic office show that the average time of the ocean greyhounds from the meridian of Montauk to their piers is eight hours. Adding to this five hours and thirty minutes, the time necessary to sail from the point of divergence to the meridian of Montauk, 120 knots, at the maximum speed, and one hour from the pier to the post-office, the total time from the point of divergence to the post-office is fourteen hours and thirty minutes, which shows a saving in favor of Fort Pond Bay of *five hours.* In foggy or stormy weather the gain for the Fort Pond route would be greatly increased, as speed must be materially reduced along the entire coast of Long Island, and especially when approaching the Sandy Hook bar; while by the Fort Pond Bay route, any reduction in speed would mean very little loss of time, as the course over which it would be necessary to reduce speed is short, and the trip from Fort Pond Bay to New York could always be made in uniform time by rail. By this course five hours could be saved and 114 miles of railroad travel—which can be made at the rate of sixty miles per hour, regardless of fogs and storms—would be substituted for 109 knots, or 125½ miles, of dangerous ocean travel.

The total gain thus estimated at both ends for the Fort Pond-Milford Haven route would be: over the Southampton route, eight hours thirty-six minutes; over the Liverpool passenger route, including the Queenstown detention, ten hours and one minute; excluding it, eight hours and thirty-one minutes; and over the Queenstown mail route, six hours forty-six minutes.

Practically the same results may be obtained by taking the distances, as estimated from the Government chart, showing the different expedient courses, and using the same standard of speed in all cases, 21.9 knots per hour and a mile per minute by rail, thus ascertain the time required to transport the mail from the New York Post-office to the London Post-office over the various routes.

QUEENSTOWN MAIL ROUTE.

Description of Route.	Distances.	Time.
From New York post-office to steamship pier	....	1 h.
From steamship pier to Sandy Hook Lightship	25 knots	3 h.
Sandy Hook to meridian of Fastnet	2,755 knots	5 d. 5 h. 48 m.
Fastnet meridian to Queenstown (Roche's Point Light)	57 knots	2 h. 36 m.
Detention at Queenstown to transfers, mails and tender to landing	....	2 h. 30 m.
Queenstown to Kingstown by rail	185 miles	3 h. 05 m.
Detention at Kingstown	....	30 m.
Kingstown to Holyhead	56 knots	2 h. 34 m.
Detention at Holyhead	....	30 m.
Holyhead to London, Euston Station	264 miles	4 h. 24 m.
Euston Station to post-office	....	1 h.
New York post-office to London post-office	....	6 d. 2 h. 57 m.

LIVERPOOL PASSENGER ROUTE LEAVING MAIL AT QUEENSTOWN.

Description of Route.	Distances.	Time.
New York post-office to steamship pier	....	1 h.
Pier to Sandy Hook Lightship	25 knots	3 h.
Sandy Hook Lightship to meridian of Fastnet	2,755 knots	5 d. 5 h. 48 m.
Fastnet to Queenstown (Roche's Point Light)	57 knots	2 h. 36 m.
Detention at Queenstown for transfer of mails	....	1 h. 30 m.
Queenstown to Liverpool	240 knots	10 h. 57 m.
Transfer at Liverpool	....	1 h.
Liverpool to London	201 miles	3 h. 21 m.
Station to post-office	....	1 h.
New York post-office to London post-office	....	6 d. 6 h. 12 m.

SOUTHAMPTON ROUTE.

Description of Route.	Distances.	Time.
New York post-office to steamship pier	....	1 h.
Pier to Sandy Hook Lightship	25 knots	3 h.
Sandy Hook Lightship to Bishop Rock	2,883 knots	5 d. 11 h. 39 m.
Bishop Rock to Southampton	215 knots	9 h. 49 m.
Detention at Southampton	....	1 h.
Southampton to London	79 miles	1 h. 19 m.
Station to post-office, Waterloo	....	1 h.
New York post-office to London post-office	....	6 d. 4 h. 47 m.

FORT POND AND MILFORD HAVEN ROUTE.

Description of Route.	Distances.	Time.
Time from New York post-office to Railroad Station, New York	....	1 h.
Railroad Station, New York, to Fort Pond Bay	114 miles	1 h. 54 m.
Detention at Fort Pond Bay	....	1 h.
Fort Pond Bay to meridian of Fastnet	2,671 knots	5 d. 1 h. 58 m.
Meridian of Fastnet to Milford Haven	170 knots	7 h. 46 m.
Detention at Milford Haven	....	1 h.
Milford Haven to London	273 miles	4 h. 33 m.
Paddington Station to post-office	....	1 h.
New York post-office to London post-office	....	5 d. 20 h. 11 m.

These calculations, based upon the maximum speed for steamships, and for long railroad distance, *show only the theoretical gain which would be made by adopting the Fort Pond-Milford Haven route, were the conditions such that these standards could be maintained for the whole distance over each route.* They can be maintained, or nearly so, in the case of the proposed new route, which has open deep-water ports, a straight course with entire exemption from bars, and almost absolute freedom from crowded waterways, for at the western terminus, the course is unobstructed and at the eastern terminus, all steamers would cross St. George's Channel in a direct line and would soon be out of the usual course for shipping. In the case of the other routes, which run for long distances along dangerous shores through crowded tortuous channels and over sand bars, the speed must be materially reduced. The assumed standard of speed cannot be maintained on either the Liverpool route after leaving Queenstown, or the Southampton route after reaching the Solent, or from Kingstown to Holyhead, on the mail route, any more than it can be continued over the Sandy Hook bar and through New York harbor. *The real advantage of the Fort Pond-Milford Haven route is, therefore, much greater than the theoretical, and to fully appreciate the gain between New York and London, which the location and merits of this new route render possible, we must compare what would be done, if it were adopted, with what is done by the other routes.*

The time allowed for carrying the mail from Queenstown to the London Post-office in these calculations is undoubtedly much smaller than the actual, and the conditions of the channel are such, that, as in New York harbor, *the actual time can never be* *reduced to the theoretical.* When it was lately decided by the Railway and Steamboat routes, in conjunction with the British Post-office Department, to run express trains both ways between Queenstown and London, so as to save all the time possible, and the arrangements were completed, the attention of the whole country was directed to the experiment, and every effort was made to ensure the quickest possible delivery on the first trip. The result was that everything was in readiness at all points, and the following shows the result of the experiment:

Detention at Queenstown to transfer mails	**2 h.**	**30 m.**
Special train, Queenstown to Kingstown Pier	**4 h.**	**34 m.**
Detention at Kingstown		**11 m.**
Packet from Kingstown to Holyhead	**3 h.**	**31 m.**
Detention at Holyhead		**9 m.**
Holyhead to Euston Station	**5 h.**	**31 m.**
Euston Station to London post-office	**1 h.**	
Total	**17 h.**	**26 m.**

A careful record of all the steamers carrying mail by the Overland Mail route between May 1 and September 5, 1895, shows that there were thirty-five eastward passages made between New York and Queenstown during that time, and that the average time between the arrival of the steamer at Roche's Point and the delivery of the mail in the London Post-office was twenty-one hours and forty minutes, and that only twice during the whole of that period was the time less than eighteen hours.

It is safe to assume, therefore, that the average time between the arrival at Queenstown and the arrival at the London Post-office is not less than eighteen hours. This time can never be greatly decreased on account of the risks, uncertainties and complications of the route, and after the new long term mail contract, which the Liverpool companies have made with the British government, goes into effect in 1897, it is not likely to be shortened for many years.

In March, 1895, an order was adopted by the House of Commons, requiring a return showing the days, hours and minutes occupied by mail steamers during the year 1894 in the transit of mails between New York and Queenstown, and also between New York and Southampton. This return discloses the following facts. The shortest time made by any ship to Queenstown was five days twelve hours forty-five minutes, to which should be added the usual time consumed in carrying the mails from Queenstown to the London Post-office, 18 hours, making a total of six days six hours forty-five minutes as the steamship and railway carriage time. One hour must be added to this for carrying the mails from the post-office to the pier in New York, making six days seven hours forty-five minutes as the shortest actual time from the post-office in New York to the post-office in London. It also shows that the average time for eleven trips of the "Lucania" was five days eighteen hours fifty-eight minutes, and adding the time from the New York Post-office to the pier, and from Queenstown to the London Post-office, nineteen hours, the average time was six days thirteen hours fifty-eight minutes.

The best average time for the American Line was made by the "New York," which for fifteen voyages averaged seven days one hour fifty-nine minutes from the New York pier to Southampton. The usual time required for carrying the mail from the Southampton docks to the London Post-office is three hours and twenty-five minutes. This is shown by the records of the forty-three steamers arriving at Southampton from New York between May 8 and September 12, 1895. Adding this time and the one hour necessary for carrying the mail from the New York Post-office to the pier, to the average time of the "New York," the average time from post-office to post-office is found to be seven days six hours and twenty-four minutes.

It is with these latter figures that the time which could be made by a transatlantic line, using Fort Pond Bay and Milford Haven should be compared, as the other lines, being well established and having their full complement of ships, cannot afford to discard their older steamers and adopt newer and faster ones. It can be safely assumed, therefore, that for some years to come the figures given in the return to the House of Commons will afford a fair standard for judging of the time which the established lines will take in making the passage from pier to pier. *The new route, therefore, would show the following gain over the best average time, which is now being made over the Queenstown and Southampton lines :*

Average time, Queenstown route, by Steamer "Lucania"	6 d. 13 h. 58 m.
Estimated time, Fort Pond-Milford Haven route, *adopting present schedule railroad time*	5 d. 22 h. 11 m.
Total gain by proposed route	15 h. 47 m.
Average time, Southampton route, by Steamer "New York"	7 d. 6 h. 24 m.
Estimated time, Fort Pond-Milford Haven route, *adopting present schedule railroad time*	5 d. 22 h. 11 m.
Total gain by proposed route	1 d. 8 h. 11 m.

The gain of a very few hours would be of the utmost importance in the matter of mail service. Granting that all existing mail steamers could make the ocean voyage fast enough to deliver the mails in the same time which the "Lucania" takes, it would rarely be possible to get a reply by the return steamer sailing a week later, except during the summer months. Even then it is by no means certain, and little, if any, opportunity is afforded for inquiries and investigation. Nothing is really gained, therefore, by the present fast steamers of the Cunard Line, for before the second return mail is due to leave, the slow steamers of every line are able to deliver their mails so as to enable a reply to be sent by the same return steamer. *The saving of a few hours would completely change this, and make the exception the rule. Steamers starting from Fort Pond Bay, on receipt of mail which had left New York on Saturday morning, would be able to deliver their mails in London the following Friday evening at the latest, so that a reply could be sent on Saturday's returning steamer, which would reach New York on Thursday night or Friday morning. The return letter would in these cases be nearly across the Atlantic when the reply, under existing conditions, is posted in London. By this route, passengers would be able to be in telegraphic communication with the rest of the world at least fifteen hours longer than by either of the other passenger routes.*

In no way can these immense advantages be secured except by a gain of several hours in the delivery of mails at the London and New York post-offices. This can only be accomplished by increasing the speed of ships—a very expensive method—or by shortening the length of the ocean voyage, and substituting as much railway travel as possible. The saving of time by shortening the distance, calls for the selection of the Fort Pond Bay and Milford Haven route. It is universally admitted that passengers will go by the shortest route. This has been shown by the fact that the rivalry of Southampton has already made serious inroads into the Liverpool traffic. The British steamers now cover all the short routes except that from Milford to Fort Pond Bay. This should induce the American people to adopt this route, and thus secure to themselves the shortest possible means of communication between the continents which would control all fast mail and express matter and all passengers to whom quick transit is of importance.

In discussing the different ocean routes it was stated that the shorter mid-ocean route was usually selected at the cost of increasing the dangers of the voyage. In selecting Milford Haven and Fort Pond Bay, however, the route is not only shortened, but all dangers are reduced to a minimum. The chief dangers Atlantic liners have to encounter, when in the vicinity of the English and Long Island coasts, are collision and stranding. The risk of collision in a run from Fastnet to Milford is certainly much less than in a run from that point to either Liverpool or Southampton, with the further advantage that when nearing the port the risk is reduced to a minimum ; whereas in the case of Southampton the risk increases as the port is approached. In the case of Milford, an approaching steamer would, before passing the Smalls, cross the up-and-down traffic of the Irish Channel, and having passed the Smalls, would be out of all that traffic, and the risk of collision would be gone. The Southampton steamer would, besides crossing the Irish Channel traffic, like the other two lines, have the large and dangerous English Channel traffic and the many fishing fleets to avoid through the entire distance to the pier. Liverpool is, of course, in a similar position. In the matter, therefore, of freedom from the risk of collision, the Milford course has a great advantage. As to stranding, it may be assumed that, with the careful navigation exercised on board such vessels as we are considering, a run of 100 miles can be made with great accuracy. The distance from Fastnet to the Smalls is not much over 100 miles, and in the thickest weather a well-navigated steamer would not, at the end of that run, be more than two miles out of her course, probably less. If this be so, the Smalls would be easily picked up, and from these to Milford Haven the way is clear. In fog it would be dangerously reckless to attempt to approach Southampton at anything like the speed at which Milford might be approached; and the same may be said as to Liverpool.

The question of this proposed transatlantic route is not a mere local one between New York and London; but it concerns all Europe and America, including Eastern Asia as well. The British Government is determined, if it lies in its power, to control the transcontinental mail. In May, a deputation waited on Lord Rosebery for the purpose of formally submitting the scheme of constructing a fast Atlantic and Pacific mail service, passing wholly between British ports, in British boats and over British rails, the object of the line being to develop and strengthen the commercial connection between the British Colonies and the United Kingdom. The success of such a scheme would require a liberal subsidy from Great Britain, and the generous policy of that government in subsidizing its mail lines is shown by the fact that in recently awarding the Irish mail contract *it raised the annual subsidy to £100,000 for a decrease of one-half hour in the time between Kingstown and Holyhead.*

There is only one way to prevent the establishment of a Canadian route which would divert much local and all through mail and traffic to the Dominion, and that is for the United States to promote and secure a through direct route, which will put the mails into New York and all Pacific ports in less time than can be done by any other route. This can be accomplished by the Fort Pond and Milford route. Canada is offering to pledge many times more money to obtain this advantage than would be required from the United States to secure and make certain for all time the intercontinental mail and passenger traffic.

The advantages of Fort Pond Bay and Milford Haven have been stated, but the adoption of the former port does not require the selection of the latter. Fort Pond Bay is open to all steamship lines and the Long Island Railroad, with its bridge over the East River, will be at the service of any steamship company which wishes to save the time at the American end.

While it is true that the present North-Atlantic companies have constructed, at vast expense, the finest and fleetest steamships afloat in any waters, and are maintaining a most magnificent ocean service, it is equally true that they do not make the quick time which might be made over this better route, and unless some one of them shall utilize the manifest advantages of this new American harbor, it is only a question of time when a new line, with at least equally good ships and service, will be established.

The problem of quick transit between New York and London has been stated. Here is what *can* be done at both ends or at either end. It remains for the American people to say what *shall* be done. To the traveller it is a question of convenience, economy, saving of time and lessening of danger; to every American citizen it should be a question of high national importance.

AUSTIN CORBIN.